

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A fluid-flow control device comprising:-

(i) a fluid liquid flow path defined by interstices of a porous medium,

(ii) a fluid liquid flow barrier at a location in the flow path, the liquid flow barrier being a non-wetting region in the flow path, and

(iii) barrier release means in the flow path, the barrier release means being a wetting agent capable of wetting said liquid flow barrier and which, in use, is moveable by fluid liquid flowing in the flow path into contact with the liquid flow barrier so as to permit fluid liquid flow through said location.

2. (Currently Amended) A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said fluid liquid is an aqueous liquid.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fluid liquid flow barrier is a hydrophobic material and the release means is a surfactant.

5. (Currently Amended) A device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the fluid liquid flow barrier is selected from the group consisting of waxes, resins, synthetic polymers, inks and paints.

6. (Previously Presented) A device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the release means is selected from the group consisting of octyl- β -D-glucopyranoside, dioctyl sulfosuccinate sodium salt, polyoxyethylene (23) dodecyl ether and polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan monolaurate.

5 7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A device as claimed in claim 7 1, wherein the ~~fluid~~ liquid flow barrier is impregnated into and immobilised on the porous medium.

10 9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the device is constructed so that, in use, there is at least one region in the flow path where the direction of ~~fluid~~ liquid flow is different, after ~~fluid~~ liquid flow through said location is initiated compared with the direction of ~~fluid~~ liquid flow in that region before ~~fluid~~ liquid flow through said location is initiated.

11. (Currently Amended) An assay device for an analyte comprising:-

- (i) a flow path for a liquid defined by interstices in a porous medium,
- (ii) at least one liquid flow barrier on the porous medium at a location in the flow path, said barrier being a non-wetting region in the flow path.
- (iii) at least one barrier release means which is a wetting agent capable of wetting said liquid flow barrier, is impregnated into the porous medium, which is soluble in the liquid, and

which, in use, is moveable by liquid flowing in the flow path into contact with the flow barrier so as to permit liquid flow through said location, and

(iv) an analyte capture region in the flow path.

5 12. (Original) A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein the device is provided with a visualising agent application zone adapted to receive a visualising agent.

10 13. (Original) A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein an analyte visualising agent is provided at a zone in the flow path, said visualising agent being capable of interacting with the analyte to indicate the presence of the analyte.

14. (Original) A device as claimed in claim 13, wherein the visualising agent is immobilised in the capture region and also serves to immobilise the analyte in the capture region.

15 15. (Original) A device as claimed in claim 13, wherein the analyte capture region includes an immobilised analyte binding substance which serves to immobilise analyte in the capture region and the visualising agent is upstream of the capture region so that in use, it flows through the capture region.

20 16. (Previously Presented) A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein a sample application zone is provided.

17. (Previously Presented) A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein a flow path geometry is selected which causes, in use, a predetermined difference in fluid flow within the analyte capture region so that distribution of analyte within the analyte capture region is not uniform in a predictable manner, whereby the amount of analyte can be determined in at least a semi-quantitative manner.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) A device as claimed in claim 16, wherein the sample application zone is surrounded by an additional flow barrier and an associated barrier release means.

20. (Previously Presented) A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein the sample to be analysed is included in the liquid which flows, in use, along the flow path.

21. (Previously Presented) A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein at least two barriers and at least two barrier release means are provided and arranged so that, in use, some liquid flows over the analyte capture region at least twice.

23. (Previously Presented) A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein a zone is provided which serves as a sample application zone and the analyte capture region.

24. (Previously Presented) A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein a zone is provided which serves as a sample application zone and a visualising agent application zone.